

Message Text

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TO AMEMBASSY LAGOS IMMEDIATE
AMEMBASSY DAR ES SALAAM IMMEDIATE
AMEMBASSY LONDON IMMEDIATE
AMEMBASSY LUSAKA IMMEDIATE
AMEMBASSY MAPUTO IMMEDIATE
AMEMBASSY PRETORIA IMMEDIATE
AMEMBASSY GABORONE IMMEDIATE
USMISSION USUN NEW YORK IMMEDIATE

C O N F I D E N T I A L STATE 072024

NODIS
DAR ES SALAAM--FOR AMBASSADORS SPAIN AND YOUNG

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: OVIP (CARTER, JIMMY)

SUBJECT: THE LAGOS SUMMIT

REF: LAGOS 3490 AND PREVIOUS

1. THE CHANGES IN SIGNALS FROM THE NIGERIANS REQUIRE
FURTHER CLARIFICATION. WHILE WE COULD AGREE TO A SUMMIT
INVOLVING HEADS OF STATE, WE HAVE RESERVATIONS ABOUT A
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MEETING ORGANIZED AT THE LEVEL OF FOREIGN MINISTERS. THE
VISIT TO NIGERIA IS AN OPPORTUNITY FOR THE PRESIDENT AND
OBASANJO TO GET TO KNOW EACH OTHER BETTER AND TO CONSULT
ON AFRICAN AND WORLD ISSUES. A RHODESIA-CENTERED FOREIGN
MINISTERIAL MEETING WOULD NOT ONLY CALL ATTENTION AWAY
FROM THE PRESIDENT'S VISIT BUT WOULD INTERFERE WITH ITS
BASIC PURPOSE.

2. IN DECIDING HOW TO PROCEED, WE NEED ANSWERS TO SEVERAL QUESTIONS. WE RECOGNIZE IT WILL BE DIFFICULT TO AVOID A MEETING IF THE NIGERIANS SET GREAT STORE BY IT, BUT WE WOULD APPRECIATE KNOWING AS SOON AS POSSIBLE HOW COMMITTED OBASANJO AND GARBA ARE TO INVITING THE FRONT LINE FOREIGN MINISTERS. WE HAVE THE IMPRESSION FROM YOUR CONVERSATION THAT OBASANJO MAY HAVE PUT THE BALL BACK IN GARBA'S COURT AND HAS DISASSOCIATED HIMSELF SOMEWHAT FROM THE CONCEPT AND

VALUE OF A MEETING. WHAT IS THE POSSIBILITY THAT THE NIGERIANS ARE THINKING IN TERMS OF A MEETING WHICH INCLUDES THE PRESIDENT, OBASANJO, SECRETARY VANCE AND THE FRONT LINE MINISTERS? DO THEY SEE THE MEETING TAKING PLACE AT FOREIGN MINISTER LEVEL ONLY?

3. WE WOULD HAVE GREAT RESERVATIONS IF IT BECAME CLEAR THE BRITISH WERE NOT TO BE ASKED TO PARTICIPATE. AN INVITATION TO A FOREIGN MINISTERS' MEETING ON RHODESIA WHICH INCLUDED THE U.S. BUT NOT THE U.K. COULD BE EMBARRASSING TO ALL CONCERNED. WE WOULD LIKE TO HAVE YOUR ESTIMATE OF OBASANJO'S AND GARBA'S THINKING ON THIS POINT. IS THERE ANY CHANCE THAT THE PATRIOTIC FRONT WOULD STILL BE IN TOWN WHEN THE FOREIGN MINISTERS MEET, AND IS THERE ANY CHANCE THEY WOULD BE ASKED TO JOIN? WHAT DO THE NIGERIANS THINK WILL BE THE AGENDA, AND WHAT

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DO THEY WANT TO SEE COMING OUT OF THE MEETING?

4. FOR DAR ES SALAAM: PENDING CLARIFICATION OF THESE POINTS BY LAGOS, WE BELIEVE IT WOULD BE BETTER NOT RPT NOT TO RAISE THE LAGOS MEETING WITH THE TANZANIANS. IF THE MATTER IS BROACHED BY THEM, WE THINK YOU SHOULD REMAIN NON-COMMITTAL, SAYING THAT WHILE WE HAD AGREED TO GARBA'S IDEA OF A LAGOS SUMMIT, WE HAD NOT CONTEMPLATED A MEETING AT THE FOREIGN MINISTERS' LEVEL.

5. FOR LONDON: YOU SHOULD TELL FCO THAT WE NOW UNDERSTAND THAT THE NIGERIANS HAVE NOT BEEN ABLE TO ARRANGE A SUMMIT MEETING IN LAGOS DURING THE PRESIDENT'S VISIT. THEY ARE NOW CONSIDERING A FOREIGN MINISTERS' MEETING AT THE SAME TIME, ABOUT WHICH WE HAVE RESERVATIONS BUT ARE EXPLORING WITH THE NIGERIANS AND WILL KEEP THE BRITISH INFORMED.

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